



United States Department of Agriculture

Office of the Secretary  
Washington, D.C. 20250

June 29, 2001

Dr. Neal P. Martin, Director  
U.S. Dairy Forage Research Center  
1925 Linden Drive West  
Madison, WI. 53706-1108

Dear Dr. Martin:

Congratulations on the 20<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the establishment of the U.S. Dairy Forage Research Center. I wish that my schedule had permitted my attendance at today's celebration. It is important to recognize the Center's vital and prominent role in assisting America's dairy farmers better meet their milk and forage production needs. I appreciate you allowing Dr. Floyd Horn to share my thoughts with you on this special day.

From its beginning, the Center has emphasized an interdisciplinary research approach to solving milk and forage production challenges. Congress and USDA's Agricultural Research Service established the Center with the mission "to develop and disseminate knowledge and tools needed for enhancing sustainable and competitive dairy forage systems that are in harmony with the environment, promote animal health, and ensure a safe and healthy food supply."

For two decades, this vision has guided the dedication and hard work by the Center's staff and stakeholders in serving the ever-changing needs of this nation's dairy producers. I am both proud and honored to be part of recognizing the Center's achievements.

To date, the research done at the Forage Center has led to:

- Increased yield and quality in livestock forages;
- Reduced field losses that occur during harvesting, handling, storing and feeding;
- Maximized dairy cow utilization of forage nutrients; and,
- Minimized soil and nutrient losses through sustainable agricultural practices.

As critical as this research is in expanding our basic knowledge of improving dairy cow performance and forage quality and yield, the Center's primary achievement is its well-earned reputation for disseminating research results. The scientists and specialists at the Center are to be applauded for their equally dedicated efforts to transfer the knowledge gained to producers, enabling them to both improve their income and to enhance their environmental stewardship.

Again, congratulations to you and your staff for making the Center a forward-thinking research facility that helps America's farmers and producers remain competitive in today's global marketplace.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Ann Veneman".

Ann M. Veneman  
Secretary